

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-7 have been amended. Claims 8-13 have been added.

Claims 1-13 are pending and under consideration.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102:

In the Office Action, at page 2, claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,790,785 to Klug et al. ("Klug"). This rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Original claims 1-7 have been amended to improve clarity and antecedent support. New claims 8-12 correspond to the features of original claims 2-4 and 6-7 without the means-plus-function language.

Klug generally describes in FIG. 4A that once a third party web site 116 has received a response from a user, a determination is made as to whether the user is registered at the web site (step 412). See column 8, lines 44-54 of Klug. If the user is registered, then no further processing related to the present invention is required. Alternatively, if the user is not registered at the third party web site, then a response is transferred from the third party web site 116 through World Wide Web 104 to the user's WWW browser 120 providing the user with the fill-out forms in which the user is requested to enter information for registering at the third party web site. Thus, in Klug, when the user ID is already stored in the third party web site database 148, the user ID is not stored in the register database, and therefore, each user cannot use the membership information common to all service provision sites.

In contrast, according to an aspect of the present invention, "a database held by an integrated membership management center, wherein when a user makes an application for a registration of membership information to one of the service provision sites by using said user terminal, the one of the service provision sites receiving the application **registers at least a part of the membership information into the database held by the one of the service provision sites,**" emphasis added, as recited in independent claim 1. Furthermore, as recited in independent claim 1, "when the membership information is not registered in a database held by the integrated membership management center, the integrated membership management center registers the membership information into the database held by the integrated membership

management center.” Similarly, independent claim 5 recites, “the integrated membership management center comprising: . . . a database for registering the new membership information when the searching unit determines that the new membership information is not registered in the database.” Accordingly, each user can use the membership information common to all the service provision sites.

Independent claim 11 recites, “the integrated membership management center comprising: . . . a database registering the new membership information when the searching unit determines that the new membership information is not registered in the database.” Because independent claim 11 includes similar claim features as those recited in independent claim 5, although of different scope, the arguments presented above supporting the patentability of independent 5 are incorporated herein to support the patentability of independent claim 11.

Accordingly, it is respectfully asserted that Klug fails to teach or suggest all the claimed features of independent claims 1, 5, and 11 and it is respectfully requested that independent claims 1, 5, and 11 and related dependent claims be allowed.

Referring to independent claim 2, this claim recites “means for posting to the at least one user terminal a user ID and a password, which are authenticated by the integrated membership management center.” Thus, the user ID and the password are common to all the service provision sites.

In contrast, in Klug, the third party web site, not the register database 144, provides the register web site with third party web site information, user ID, or password as shown in step 504 of FIG. 5. Therefore, the issued ID or password is not always common to all the service provision sites.

Independent claim 7 recites, “means for posting to the user terminal a user ID and a password authenticated by the integrated membership management center. Further, independent claim 8 recites, “a posting unit posting to the user terminal a user ID and a password, which are authenticated by the integrated membership management center.” Independent claim 12 recites, “a third unit posting to the user terminal a user ID and a password authenticated by the integrated membership management center.” Because independent claims 7, 8, and 12 include similar claim features as those recited in independent claim 2, although of different scope, the arguments presented above supporting the patentability of independent 2 are incorporated herein to support the patentability of independent claims 7, 8, and 12.

Accordingly, it is respectfully asserted that Klug fails to teach or suggest all the claimed features of independent claims 1, 2, 7, 8, and 12 and it is respectfully requested that independent claims 1, 2, 7, 8, and 12 and related dependent claims be allowed.

In the Office Action, at page 6, claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,496,855 to Hunt et al. ("Hunt"). This rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Hunt generally describes that in step 101 or 201 a user completes a new member section of an entry page, giving a username, password, email address and language. See column 8, lines 23-42 of Hunt. The user then selects an option that says that they are not already a member of the referring site and clicks on an "enter" button. A new page then appears in step 102 or 202 requesting additional information that is necessary for the user to actually register with the referring site. The site requirements are determined by accessing the registration profile database 13. A master user profile for the new member is created and stored in the user profile database 12, together with a personal profile for the new registration. Once the user has provided the additional information, they click "enter" and the user's new home page for the RAS appears (in step 203) showing the referring site as a registered site and a separate list suggesting other affiliated sites where the user may wish to register.

However, Hunt fails to teach or suggest, "the integrated membership management center comprising: searching means searching and determining whether a record exists that coincides with new membership information that a user has used when the user has accessed a service provision site from a user terminal; and a database for registering the new membership information when the searching unit determines that the new membership information is not registered in the database," as recited in independent claim 5. Similarly, Hunt is silent as to teaching or suggesting, "the integrated membership management center comprising: a search unit searching and determining whether a record exists that coincides with new membership information that a user has used when the user has accessed a service provision site from a user terminal; and a database registering the new membership information when the searching unit determines that the new membership information is not registered in the database," as recited in independent claim 11.

Accordingly, it is respectfully asserted that Hunt fails to teach or suggest all the claimed features of independent claims 1, 5, and 11 and it is respectfully requested that independent claims 1, 5, and 11 and related dependent claims be allowed.

CONCLUSION:

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot, and further, that all pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. Thus, there being no further outstanding objections or rejections, the application is submitted as being in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any remaining issues to be addressed, it is believed that prosecution can be expedited by the Examiner contacting the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview to discuss resolution of such issues.

If there are any underpayments or overpayments of fees associated with the filing of this Amendment, please charge and/or credit the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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